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South Vietnam - Cambodia: Cross-border operations from the Mekong Delta against Communist forces in nearby Cambodian sanctuaries touched off stiff fighting this weekend.

South Vietnamese ranger, armored, and air units raided a Communist base area within Cambodia near the northwestern border of Chau Doc Province on 28 March. Forty-two enemy troops were killed in contrast to South Vietnamese losses of four killed and 35 wounded. This was the second strike in as many days against this particular Communist redoubt, and the third confirmed cross-border foray in the delta since the ouster of Sihanouk on 18 March.

The Communists in Chau Doc, meanwhile, are becoming increasingly active in response to the threat posed to their base areas by these operations. Over the weekend, elements of two North Vietnamese regiments launched a series of coordinated attacks against government positions in the Seven Mountains area of Chau Doc Province, including the district town of Tri Ton. At least 20 South Vietnamese defenders were killed and more than 100 wounded, while the enemy lost 68 killed. A US combat base along the Cambodian border in northern III Corps also came under heavy attack this weekend. US forces took their heaviest casualties in a single engagement in several months--14 killed and 36 wounded--before driving off the attackers with losses of 61 killed.



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In other military developments in South Vietnam over the weekend, there were numerous indications of enemy plans for a "highpoint" of tactical activity throughout much of the country on the night of 31 March - 1 April. Any attacks that materialize will probably be spearheaded by local force units and feature widespread shellings, sapper raids, and assorted acts of terrorism against pacification and Vietnamization targets.



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Cambodia: Antigovernment disturbances along the eastern border have subsided, but there is a potential for additional trouble.

Although there have been no new pro-Sihanouk demonstrations in Kompong Cham Province, [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] even though the government still controls the town of Kompong Cham more troubles lie ahead because many small outlying villages in the area may yet oppose the government. [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] about 1,000 persons were arrested following the demonstrations on 26 and 27 March. [REDACTED] many of those arrested were Vietnamese.

The US Embassy, meanwhile, reports the capital is at least outwardly calm, while the over-all political and military situation remains unclear. The government is keeping up a barrage of information and propaganda broadcasts to rally popular support and to counter rumors and Sihanouk's statements from Peking, such as his unsubstantiated claim that three army battalions have gone over to his side.

On the military side, there is no reliable evidence available thus far to confirm government statements that sizable numbers of Viet Cong troops have attacked government forces some 30 miles southeast of Phnom Penh.

The Communists are continuing their strong propaganda attacks on the government, however. In another official statement of support for Sihanouk, Hanoi attempted to allay fears among Cambodians that to support Sihanouk now would simply mean a Communist take-over. It asserted that the "militant solidarity" among the people of Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos would guarantee that they could all develop "in accordance with their own ways." [REDACTED]

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Lebanon: The internal security situation seems to be improving. A cease-fire was arranged at a meeting of government, Phalangist, and various commando leaders Friday, and no serious incidents have occurred since. The Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, a radical commando organization, apparently was not included, however, and has claimed responsibility for the harmless explosion near the American Embassy Saturday night. This action, it said, was in response to the embassy's attempt "to foment communal strife and destroy the fedayeen movement" in Lebanon. The minister of interior has also made this allegation, as well as the Lebanese left-wing press.

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Cuba: Castro is unlikely to meet his ambitious goal of producing ten million tons of sugar this year. Sugar production has topped five million tons but is now even further behind schedule than it was in early March. Both the volume of cane milled and the milling yield continue to fall below planned levels because of unseasonable rainfall and labor and transportation problems that have plagued recent sugar harvests. Although the lag is still moderate, Cuba probably has only 30 to 50 days of good harvesting weather remaining until spring rains compound production problems.

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Burma: Two engagements between government forces and White Flag Communists in northeast Burma during the past two months have broken the relative lull in the insurgency that had existed since last December. In late February, the government claimed to have inflicted heavy casualties on a Communist force, and recently a larger White Flag force ambushed a government relief column and besieged and possibly captured a small government post. Other than these actions, White Flag insurgency has been limited to minor harassment of government positions during the current dry season, when considerable activity usually occurs.

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